Sri K. PUTTASWAMY.—Are the Government aware that an answer was given on the floor of this House that promotion from Second Class to First Class is governed by strict seniority?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—I am not aware of any such answer given.

Reversion of decision to open Toddy Shops in 1953-54.

Q.—285. Sri N. C. NAGAIAH REDDY (Goribidnur).—

Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(*a*) whether Sri T. Channiah, Excise Minister, announced to the Press that two hundred toddy shops would be reopened during the year 1953-54;

(*b*) if so, the reasons for such a step;

(*c*) whether that decision was reversed within 48 hours and the reasons therefor?

A.—Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO (Minister for Law and Education).—

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) According to the Prohibition Policy pursued by the Government during 1947-48, a 20 per cent cut of the excise shops and of the quantities of exciseable articles supplied to the shops was effected. During 1948-49, total prohibition by districts was introduced, starting with Kolar, Tumkur and Chitaldrug, and thus the prohibition policy was totally revised. But the shops closed as per old policy were not reopened. As there was demand for the reopening of the said shops, Government decided to reopen them excluding the 5-mile dry belt area along the Madras border, in all wet areas.

(*c*) The decision was not reversed in 48 hours. As there were representations from several quarters to the effect that such a step would be considered as a reversal of the Prohibition Policy, it was decided to maintain the *status quo*.

Sri N. C. NAGAIAH REDDY.—"As there was demand for the reopening of the said shops, Government decided to reopen them" ಎಂದು ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದೀರಲ್ಲಾ, ಯಾರು ತಮ್ಮನ್ನು reopen ಮಾಡ ಬೇಕೆಂದು ಕೇಳಿಕೊಂಡರು? ಯಾರಾದರೂ ನಿರ್ಣಯ ಗಳನ್ನು ಕಳುಹಿಸಿದ್ದರೆ?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—Representations from the public were made.

Sri H. C. LINGA REDDY.—When was the Excise portfolio changed?

Sri A. G. RAMACHANDRA RAO.—It was not changed and has not been changed.

Point of order regarding one Minister answering for another while both are present.

Sri M. LINGANNA.—I rise to a point of order. With regard to the issue raised whether any Minister could answer on behalf of any other Minister, so far as that aspect is concerned, the Chair was pleased to give a ruling that any Minister in the absence of any other Minister, could answer on behalf of the Minister who was absent. But here in view of the fact that the Excise portfolio has not been changed and in view of the fact that the Excise Minister is present in the House, I take exception to the fact that another Minister should be allowed to answer for him. I am not basing my observations on this particular aspect from any other point of view; I am doing so from the point of view that the procedure should be regular, from the point of view of constitutional propriety, that it should not be allowed. So from these points of view, I submit that whenever there is the Minister of the concerned portfolio and for which he is responsible, he should be asked to answer the questions pertaining to his Department. But whenever the particular Minister is absent, in his